

he pronoun"? Absurd. [was: Re: Crossposting [was: Re: Traditional gender-free "he" [was: Re: "16 and 276 are 292"? No.

Re: "Gender-free masculine pronoun"? Absurd. [was: Re: Crossposting [was: Re: Traditional gender-free "he" [was: Re: "16 and 276 are 292"? No. [was: Re: Lack of vocabulary in English?]]]]

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From: Carmen L. Abruzzi (carmenlabruzzo_at_yahoo.com)

Date: 03/12/05

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josephus wrote:

>

> *Jacques Guy wrote:*

>

>> *Bob Cunningham wrote:*

>>[...]

>>> *"gender-free neutral masculine singular pronoun"*

>>

>> *I squarely lay the blame on the vandals who*

>> *have taken to using "gender" (a grammatical term)*

>> *for what is "sex" (a biological term).*

>>

>> *"Masculine" (or "feminine") has nothing to do with sex. Especially in*

>> *Romance languages. In Italian, "una persona" is feminine. Io sono una*

>> *persona, eppure sono maschio.*

>> *(I am a person, yet I am a man). Same in French: personne (feminine).*

>> *Same in Spanish.*

Yes, but in English "masculine" and "feminine" *do* have to do with sex.

That is, the grammatical gender of English is based on sex, unlike the grammatical gender of the Romance languages.

>>

>> *I have nothing but contempt for those obnoxious*

>> *cretins who have presumed to mess up the English language*

>> *and, in Canada, the French language.*

>>

>> *Let us say, then, that the masculine 3rd person singular*

>> *pronoun is unmarked for sex.*

Let us also say, then, that the moon is made of green cheese. Let us have nothing but contempt for those who confuse the actual makeup of the moon with the bits of rock brought back by astronauts.

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he pronoun"? Absurd. [was: Re: Crossposting [was: Re: Traditional gender-free "he" [was: Re: "16 and 276 are 292"? No.]

- >> *Mind you, that ought to be refined. For the feminine 3rd*
- >> *person singular pronoun is also unmarked for sex when*
- >> *referring to inanimate objects (ship, car), and to some animals*
- >> *(cat, fox).*

This is not grammatical gender, it is anthropomorphizing. Cats and foxes are not normally referred to as "she", unless they are actually females. Ships and cars being referred to as "she" is an affectation, and not usual usage. That is, someone might speak of their own car, their pride and joy, as "she's a beauty", but the same person isn't going to say of a stalled car blocking the street, "when are they going to tow her away?".

- >
- >
- > *I agree with this in point of fact*
- > *ships, airplanes, and females are 'she'*
- > *enemy ships, cars and tanks are 'he'*
- > *the distinction then is semantic not syntactic*

Exactly. It's nothing to do with grammar, it's a code.

- >
- > *they/them/their are plural and neutral and can refer to anyone.*
- >
- > *The point of this thread appears to be that 'he' and 'she' can be used*
- > *in a reference that does not imply sex. unfortunately the naive*
- > *linguistics in English is that HE is male and SHE is female.*

But as I've said, they *are* male and female. It's you who are naive about English linguistics and think that it follows a Romance pattern.

but cars,

- > *and enemy ships and such things are a military convention and have*
- > *nothing to do with spoken or written English. Native speakers tend to*
- > *profess the former and display the latter.*

This is incomprehensible.

- >
- > *josephus*
- > *you know English is my second language*
- > *unfortunately I dont have a first.*
- >
- >

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